

Proposed Action and Alternatives

BPA's proposed action is the execution of power purchase and construction and generation interconnection agreements to acquire and transmit up to 50 aMW (up to about 200 MW) of output from the proposed Maiden Wind Farm, which would be developed to generate up to 494 MW¹. Benton and Yakima Counties' proposed action is to grant Conditional Use Permits (CUPs) and other required permits for full build-out of the project, which would require construction of up to 549 wind turbines for a 494-MW project.

This EIS evaluates two alternatives – the Proposed Action (which means that part or all of the proposed project would be built) (Section 2.1) and No Action (Section 2.2). BPA would not purchase or transmit power from the project under the No Action Alternative and it is therefore likely that the project would not be constructed. Section 2.3 describes several alternatives that were considered but eliminated from detailed evaluation in this EIS.

2.1 Proposed Project

2.1.1 Overview

Washington Winds Inc. (the project developer) proposes to construct and operate up to 494 MW of wind generation at the proposed Maiden Wind Farm site in Benton and Yakima Counties, Washington (see Figure 2.1-1). Development of the proposed project likely would occur in stages. The initial stage would likely involve the installation and operation of up to 50 aMW (up to about 200 MW) of wind turbines. Subsequent stages, which may or may not be undertaken, could develop all or part of the remaining MWs at the Maiden Wind Farm site. Although the full 494 MW of power may not be constructed, this EIS evaluates impacts of the proposed project at full build-out conditions of 494 MW.

The permanent project footprint (for the life of the project) would occupy approximately 251 acres for wind turbines, access roads, substations, and other facilities. Approximately 1,063 acres would be temporarily occupied during construction by facilities such as staging areas, equipment laydown areas, and rock quarries. Up to 549 wind turbines would be arranged in numerous "strings" for a maximum of about 30 total miles of turbine strings (see Figure 2.1-2). The height of the turbines would range from about 300 feet to 390 feet, depending on the turbine size selected. To access and service the wind turbines and other facilities at the site, up to 10.3 miles of existing private roads would be improved, and up to 44.5 miles of new access roads would be constructed. Up to three operations and maintenance (O&M) buildings, each approximately 20,000 square feet on 4-acre sites, would be constructed at the site.

¹ Washington Winds Inc. has submitted a request to BPA for up to 400 MW of transmission services, yet has submitted Conditional Use Permit applications to Benton and Yakima Counties for a project that could generate up to 494 MW. For the purposes of this EIS, 494 MW is considered the maximum amount of power that could be generated by the proposed project.

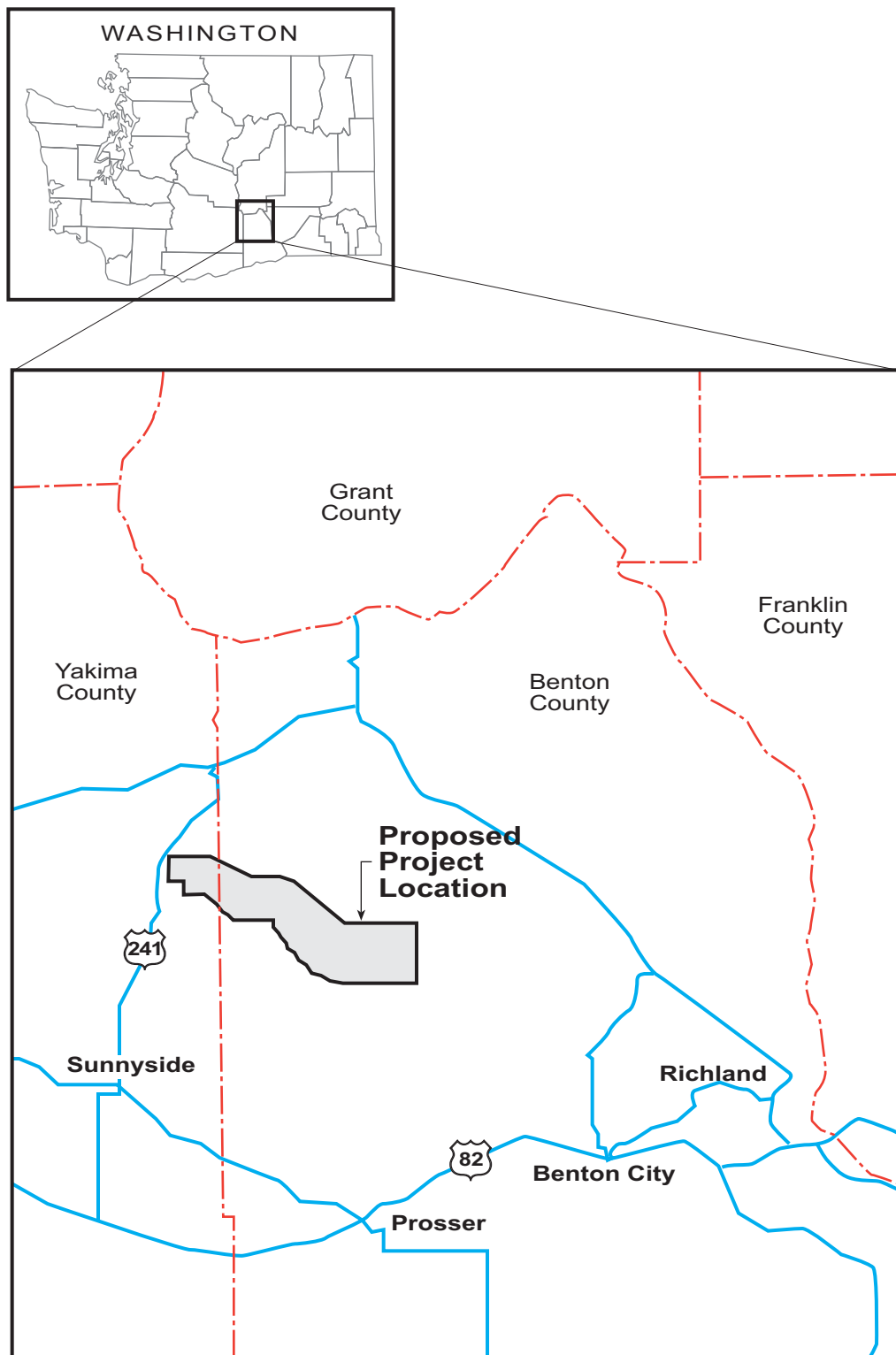


FIGURE 2.1-1
Proposed Project Location

